

ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

*Under the auspices of: The World Council of Churches * The International Missionary Council
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Christian Association * The World's Student Christian Federation * The World Council of
Christian Education * The United Bible Societies*

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No. 27

Twenty-fourth Year

July 12th, 1957

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WCC Central Committee Meets July 30 - August 7 in U.S.

The 90-member Central Committee of the World Council of Churches will hold its annual meeting at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, from July 30 to August 7. It will be the first major meeting in the United States since the full-scale 1954 WCC Assembly at Evanston, Illinois.

During its sessions, the policy-making group will discuss the possibilities of "integrating" the International Missionary Council and the World Council. The committee will act on the proposal made in March by the Eastern Asia Christian Conference that the work of the present IMC-WCC joint East Asia secretariat be increased.

The committee will receive recommendations based on the recent three-month survey of race relations of Asia and Africa undertaken for the Council by Dr. J. Oscar Lee of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, a joint agency of the World Council and the International Missionary Council, will report on points of international tension.

In the area of the so-called "younger churches", the committee will hear a report on the progress of the three-year study on Christian responsibility in areas of rapid social change. Conferences and projects are underway in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The contacts between the World Council of Churches and the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, not a Council member, will also be reviewed. This has been discussed at most of the recent meetings of the Council. Most recent development was the postponement of the meeting between the two groups scheduled for Paris in January. The Russian churchmen asked for more time to prepare.

The place and theme of the 1960 Assembly of the WCC will be discussed by the Central Committee. Earlier this year, the 12-member Executive Committee meeting in Geneva "received sympathetically" an invitation from Ceylon. The constituting assembly was held in Amsterdam, Holland, in 1948. Six years later the second assembly was in the U.S.

There are 73 clergymen, 11 laymen and six women from 31 different nations on the Central Committee. The Central Committee is responsible for determining the policies of the WCC between the assemblies, held every six years. Last summer the committee met in Galyatető, Hungary.

A consultation on "The Renewal of the Church" will be held at Yale from July 15 to 20, the largest of 21 WCC meetings being held in conjunction with the Central Committee. Twenty-five churchmen from overseas will join more than 100 North American participants for study and discussion. The opening address will be given by Professor Chandran Devanesen of India. Other speakers will include Dr. W.A. Visser 't Hooft and the executive secretaries of the two sponsoring departments of the consultation, the Rev. Hans-Ruedi Weber, of the WCC's Laity Department, and Madeleine Barot, of the WCC's Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women in Church and Society.

Other WCC meetings scheduled for Yale include sessions of departments, commissions and divisions of the council. Its Executive Committee will meet from July 28-30 at Seabury House, Greenwich, Connecticut. E.P.S., Geneva

UNITED STATES

Ecumenical Institutes for U.S. and Canada

(New York) - "The Ecumenical Movement and the Local Church" is the theme for a series of summer ecumenical institutes for ministers and laity to be held in key areas such as Boston, Dallas-Fort Worth, Chicago, and New York-Philadelphia.

Among the 25 world-known lecturers, most of whom will be in the United States to attend the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches at Yale University Divinity School in August, is the Council's honorary president, the Right Reverend Dr. G.K.A. Bell, Bishop of Chichester. Dr. Martin Niemöller (Germany), Bishop Leslie Newbigin of the Church of South India and Metropolitan James of Melita are to participate.

Plan of the institutes is an ecumenical venture itself. In each major area many seminaries are sponsoring the institutes jointly. Local councils of churches are cooperating. The U.S. Conference of the World Council of Churches is helping to arrange the series.

Prominent Asian church leaders listed for the summer courses include Dr. V.E. Devadutt, Bishop Rajah Manikam, the Rev. Russell Chandran, Mr. Rajaiah D. Paul, all of India; and the Rev. Andrew Thakur Das, West Pakistan.

The summer institutes, most of them five days in length, seek to bring the ecumenical movement and the local church into direct contact. Staff of the World Council of Churches who will be lecturing include Dr. W.A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary, Dr. Leslie E. Cooke, director of the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees, and Dr. Elfan Rees, of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. E.P.S., Geneva

THE NETHERLANDSGeneral Synod Votes to Admit Women to Ministry

Women will be admitted to the office of elder and deacon in the Reformed Church in the Netherlands, according to action taken on June 25 by the General Synod. A special dispensation in each individual case will be necessary to admit women into the full ministry of the church.

In other action the Synod considered the Delta-scheme calling for the closure of a number of sea-arms in the Netherlands, which will allow for a large increase in population. The main problems, the Synod said, recommending a study of the situation, will be industrialisation and urbanisation and the need for mass recreation.

The Synod heard a report on the controversial subject of artificial insemination from the Council for Church and Family. While artificial insemination within marriage is not completely prohibited, the council recommended that when three persons are involved the act should be punishable by law.

A report on conversations between members of the Arminian Church and the Reformed Church was submitted to the Synod and described as the first step toward reunion. Armenians were expelled from the Reformed Church in 1619 for dogmatic reasons.

E.P.S., Geneva

SOUTH AFRICA"The Church Cannot Lose"

Two Anglican bishops have spoken recently on the controversial racial policy of the government of South Africa.

The Bishop of Johannesburg, Dr. Richard Ambrose Reeves, said in New York that there would be open conflict between church and state in South Africa if the government enforced the recently-enacted Native Laws Amendment Act (see EPS Nos. 10, 11, 13, 14 and 15/16). He warned that if the Minister of Native Affairs used his authority to keep Africans away from "white churches", the Anglican and other churches "will tell the people to disobey the law and then stand by them to the end".

Dr. Reeves is in the United States for a seven-week speaking tour sponsored by the American Church Union (Episcopal) and the South Africa Defence Fund.

"The church cannot lose", Dr. Reeves said. "History is littered with people who tried to tell the church what to do but failed."


The bishop heads the Treason Trials Defence Committee which is seeking to raise more than \$400,000 for the legal defence and family support of 156 persons accused by the South African government of high treason because they resisted the official apartheid policy.

In Capetown, where he was making an unofficial visit prior to taking up residence there in September, Anglican Archbishop-elect Joost de Blank said that if he found South Africa's racial policy was based on unfair discrimination he would "obey God rather than the government".

E.P.S., Geneva

UNITED STATESReactions of White Congregations to Negro Pastors

Two Negro Methodist pastors of all-white congregations are in the news, one because he has been "promoted" to a larger charge, and one because his congregation quit in protest of his appointment.



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The Rev. Simon P. Montgomery, who went to the all-white church at Old Mystic, Connecticut, in 1955, has been appointed to another all-white church in Rockville with 275 members. During the time he was at Old Mystic the membership doubled to 90 and a \$5,000 building programme was completed. In January Mr. Montgomery was elected the first Negro chaplain of the State House of Representatives.

Meanwhile, in Los Angeles, California, the 43 active members of the Normandie Avenue Church resigned in protest when the Rev. N. Burlin Higgins was appointed as their pastor. Methodist District Superintendent said church authorities felt Normandie Avenue should be inter-racial because 60 per cent of the 20,000 population within a radius of a mile and a half is Negro. "The people already are coming to support the new pastor," Dr. Ragsdale said. "There were 17 Negroes and 50 white persons at a recent service."

Commented Mr. Higgins: "My appointment thus becomes an even greater challenge to rebuild God's house on the ruins of neglect." E.P.S., Geneva

UNITED STATES

Brethren, Lutherans, Quaker Ask for End of Bomb Tests

Three church groups in the United States, the Quakers, the Brethren and the Augustana Lutherans have appealed to governments to end nuclear tests and break the "tragic impasse" which surrounds disarmament.

The American Friends Service Committee wrote to President Eisenhower of the U.S., Prime Minister Harold MacMillan and Premier Nikolai A. Bulganin, saying that an "act of moral initiative" on the part of any nation in stopping nuclear tests "unequivocally and without reservation" would "release creative moral power of incalculable effect".

The Church of the Brethren, at its annual conference in Richmond, Virginia, said that continued manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons presents not only a physical danger but imperils "our relations with other nations, especially in the Pacific area".

In Omaha, Nebraska, the 98th annual synod of the Augustana Lutheran Church also urged a halt to nuclear tests. E.P.S., Geneva

YUGOSLAVIA

9,000 Hungarian Refugees Remain

The number of Hungarian refugees in Yugoslavia has dropped from 18,000 to 9,000, Dr. Edgar H.S. Chandler, director of the WCC's Service to Refugees, reports after a visit there last week.

While the morale problem is still serious, it has improved recently because of new immigration opportunities, he said. There are resettlement plans for most of the remaining refugees. Most of those who have been resettled have gone to South America and Australia. Only close relatives of persons already in the United States have been accepted for emigration there. Physical conditions in the camps have been substantially improved, he added.

The biggest problems are the students and the 620 unaccompanied youths between the ages of 14 and 18, Dr. Chandler reported. The youths are in a special camp near the Rumanian border, and the resident counselor is Miss Marie Maylan, a former CIMADE-WCC worker at Sucy, France.

Three new staff members are strengthening the World Council's operations for counselling and resettlement of the Hungarians, Dr. Chandler said. Miss Mollie

Rule, resettlement officer in Greece, has arrived in Belgrade, replacing Mr. Jan van Hoogstraten of Church World Service, who has returned to the United States. Miss Ella Wood, who has been in the ICEM office in Vienna, and Madame Jenne Eovet of Switzerland, will go to Yugoslavia this week as administrative secretaries. The fourth staff member in Yugoslavia is Mr. George Wood, who has been at work since March.

E.P.S., Geneva

SOUTH AFRICA

Autonomous Bantu Church Recommended

A study committee has recommended that an autonomous Bantu Church, Reformed in doctrine, liturgy and ecclesiastical law, should be set up in South Africa. The report was submitted to a meeting on June 25 of representatives of the Federal Missionary Council of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk and of the Gereformeerde and the Nederduitse Hervormde Kerke.

Still to be ratified by the synods concerned, the report calls for mutual consultation on work in the field and for an Inter-Church Advisory Committee that would study problems related to missions and advise the churches.

The group agreed on qualifications for membership, recognition of each other's members, minimum requirements in connection with training of the Bantu ministers, translation of church documents, and Bantuistics as a subject in European schools.

There is already a Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

E.P.S., Geneva

URUGUAY

New Federation to Take Part in Social Change Study

(Montevideo) - Just barely a year after its organisation, the Federation of Protestant Churches of Uruguay is participating in the ecumenical rapid social change study and has appointed special study commissions on theology, evangelism, social questions, etc. In this connection a conference on Christian responsibility in areas of rapid social change was held last month in cooperation with the Protestant Federation in Rio de la Plata (Argentina).

After a discussion of several years, the Uruguay federation became independent in August, 1956. Until last August, the churches belonging to the new federation were affiliated with the Protestant Federation in Rio de la Plata.

Aims of the young federation include strengthening the already existing cooperation between the Protestant churches and intensifying work in the fields of evangelism, education and youth. The formation of the federation, as expressed in its constitution, means that Protestant interests will be more effectively represented in official quarters and to the general public.

The federation is concerned with ensuring that freedoms proclaimed in the Declaration of Human Rights are not infringed, placing special emphasis on freedom of conscience and freedom of religion. The Protestants of Uruguay say that they have been inspired in this by the work of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, a joint agency of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council.

Other activities of the church council include promoting closer contacts with the WCC and the IMC, publishing a bulletin, "Unidad Cristiana", and setting up an ecumenical library containing all documents on ecumenical subjects which exist in Spanish and documents in other languages published by the WCC and other groups. Last January the federation organised ecumenical meetings to mark

the Universal Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The federation works in cooperation with the Committee for Cooperation in Latin America for greater use of press and radio.

At its first annual meeting in Montevideo in May, it was reported that the German Evangelical Church in Uruguay has joined the federation and the League of Protestant Women is a new affiliate. Other members are the Nazarenes, the Lutheran Church, Methodist Church and the Waldensian Church. The other affiliated organizations are the Mennonite Mission, the League of Protestant Youth, United Bible Societies, the Mennonite Bible Seminary, and the libraries "La Cruzada" and "La Aurora".
E.P.S., Geneva

YUGOSLAVIA

Deaconesses House Closes at Vrbas

The Reformed Church's Deaconesses House at Vrbas, Yugoslavia, has been turned over to the government and the residents removed to state institutions, to Germany, and to private homes.

The action came after months of negotiations between the state and the church. The home had been founded in 1923. During the Second World War it was directed by a diaconal association which was dissolved in 1945. After the war, church circles in Switzerland assumed a large part of the responsibility for the house. Last August, the state told the Yugoslavian churchmen that the home had not been requisitioned before because it had not been needed and because authorities saw that "the Reformed Church was doing fine, praiseworthy work for the benefit of humanity". But now, government officials said, the house was needed for a hospital in the Vrbas district.

When leaving the home, the church was allowed to take all equipment and supplies acquired since 1946.

Reformed Church officials write that only those patients who requested it were turned over to state institutions. Twenty-one are being transported to Germany. Six others have been placed in homes of Reformed members.

The closing of the home has revived interest in deacony work and leaders say that within the future the church "will have not one home, but 30, 40 or even 50 deaconesses homes as sick and aged are placed in the homes of individual church members as paying guests". The Synodic Council voted to care for these "forsaken and needy brethren who cannot be properly supplied by their relations or parishes". There are two deaconesses and one probationary sister.

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In the Reformed Church, reorganised after World War II, each community is considered to be a church, no matter how small, if it has its own consistory, if there is a service every Sunday, whether there is a minister or not, if the sacraments are administered, if children receive religious instruction and if the parishioners personally contribute to the support of the local church and the deacony work of the national church. There are 40 such parishes, and an additional 34 diaspora parishes. The 74 parishes are cared for by 24 ministers and three assistant ministers and there is a total membership, including children, of 31,345 persons.

Church officials say that a law passed in 1953 is solving many difficulties, granting freedom of religion, of religious instruction and of worship, but by-laws have not been published yet, though they are in process, and Reformed churchmen say they "expect much of them".

One of the biggest problems facing the Reformed Church is training of young pastors. Because there is no Reformed seminary in the country, the last ministers conference has drawn up a plan for a seminary which would begin by offering a one-year course in basic theology.

Through its mission work, the Reformed Church has built a room in the Cameroon Christian College, sent four cows to the mission centre in Lebanon and helped support the work of two missionaries in India.

Publications of the Reformed Church include a Bible guide, a monthly booklet called "Home Meditation", a "Little Church Hymnary" and a monthly mimeographed newsletter in Hungarian, German and English.

In Belgrade in May, the Methodist Church had its first service in the oratory of the newly-formed Reformed Church. From now on there will be weekly services in Hungarian, German and Serbian in the Reformed Church in Belgrade.

E.P.S., Geneva

The International Review of Missions

In the International Review of Missions for July, Dr. Kenneth Cragg takes discussion on Hendrik Kraemer's "Religion and the Christian Faith" a stage further in an article called "Hearing by the Word of God". Dr. E.C. Bhatti attempts to answer the question "Is the Church in India Thinking?". P.D. Devanandan writes on "A Centre for the Study of Hinduism", a venture recently launched under his direction to begin to meet the need to understand trends in Hinduism today. The Rev. John R. Fleming, secretary of the Malayan Christian Council, presents "Scripture Distribution and the Living Indigenous Church" in terms of the use and study of the Bible as part of the life and growth of a church. The mission to the Jews is studied by the Rev. E.S. Gabe in "Atonement in Judaism and the Missionary Approach". Dr. Maurice Heusinkveld, in Iraq with the American Reformed Church Mission, sets out, in "The New Missionary Committee and Field Orientation", plans to give missionary candidates preparation for their daily contacts. M. Emmanuel La Gravière, of the "Conseil de l'Union Française", writes on "The Problem of Alcoholism in the Countries and Territories south of the Sahara". "IMC-WCC Relations" are discussed in the context of the 'integration' issue by Sir Kenneth Grubb. The meeting of the East Asia Christian Conference at Prapat, Indonesia, is described in "The Significance of Prapat" by F.S. De Silva, of the Methodist Church in Ceylon. E.P.S., Geneva

The Ecumenical Review

The July number of the Ecumenical Review, published by the World Council of Churches, devotes three articles to "science and religion". Professor H.H. Wolf, director of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, writes on "The Old Problem: Science and the Christian Faith". Erik Ingelstam, a Swedish physicist, discusses "Contemporary Science and Human Life". Samuel H. Miller of Harvard examines relations between "The Church and the Scientists".

In commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the "Unitas Fratrum" (Moravians), Elisabeth H. Zorb contributes a study of Zinzendorf. Norman Goodall, secretary of the Joint Committee of the International Missionary Council and the WCC, outlines "Some Underlying Issues" bearing on the proposed integration of the two world bodies. Reinold von Thadden-Trieglaff traces the rôle of "The Kirchentag in the Renewal of the Church". Robert S. Bilheimer, director of the WCC's Division

of Studies, presents his reflections on "International Church Assistance and Rapid Social Change" following a recent journey in Asia.

The Ecumenical Chronicle contains recent documents of important bearing on Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees arising out of the East Asian Study Conference held under WCC auspices at Siantar, Sumatra. There is also an analysis of the recently issued report on Anglican-Presbyterian inter-church relations in the United Kingdom. The World Council Diary comments on recent developments in the ecumenical community; the threats to the ecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople, changes in Faith and Order, and youth work in Latin America.

There are surveys of books on the Bible, Eastern Orthodoxy, and other reviews and short notices. E.P.S., Geneva

In Brief

The Rev. Juraj Struharik of Backa province near the Hungarian frontier has been elected bishop of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in Yugoslavia. The church has 37 parishes served by 30 clergymen.

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Patriarch Ignatius Ephrem I of Antioch and All the Orient, supreme head of the Assyrian Orthodox Church, died at his patriarchal seat in Homs, Syria, in June, at the age of 70. He had been head of the church since 1933.

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"Episcopal Churchnews", published in Richmond, Virginia, will cease publication with its August 18 issue. The magazine, which has a circulation of 20,000, was begun in 1951 as the successor to the 116-year-old "Southern Churchman".

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Dr. John Morgan, 71, fourth Archbishop of Wales and the 74th bishop of Llandaff, died in London on June 26. Funeral services were held in his Cathedral Church at Llandaff, Wales, on July 1.

* *

Two citizens of the United States were arrested in Ayapel, Colombia, last month at the instigation of a priest, and charged with being found in Catholic mission territory without authorisation from the local priest. According to press reports, the two men, who were doing a documentary film on the work of the Latin America Mission, were questioned by police and then told by the mayor to leave town immediately.

* *

In Hungary the bishops, professors of theology, seniors, pastors and lay leaders in the Protestant churches have protested against the atom-bomb experiments and against the use of weapons of mass destruction. They have sent a declaration to the Big Four and to the United Nations through the Hungarian Peace Council, referring to the appeal issued by the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches, and to the views of a number of Protestant leaders on the question. The Hungarian churches say they want to continue to support "the unceasing endeavour of the Hungarian Peace Council in the interest of preserving the peace of mankind".

* *

Eighteen women's organisations in Western Germany, including the "Evangelische Frauenarbeit" and the Association of German Catholic Women, have issued an appeal to the women of the world demanding the cessation of atom-bomb experiments, graduated disarmament under suitable control until all atomic weapons are completely banned by mutual agreement, and intensive research into measures of protection for the population, and provision of the same. They urged the Government of the Federal Republic to put forward these requests when undertaking international negotiations.

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At the end of June a number of students and Protestant student-chaplains were arrested at Weimar, in the German Democratic Republic. According to reports received, some of the students have since been released.

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The city of Munich has now officially invited the German Evangelical Kirchentag to meet there in 1959, according to a letter from the Lord Mayor Thomas Wimmer to Dr. Reinold von Thadden, president of the Kirchentag.

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At its conference in Berlin the leaders of the United Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD) said they were hesitant about the efforts to start a permanent conference of all the European churches (see EPS No. 22). In their view, the outcome of the conference of European churches recently held at Lise-lund, Denmark, is still not clear enough "as an expression of the aims of a special association of that kind to make it possible for the German Lutheran churches to join it on that basis". The relationship between these plans and the "regular organs of ecumenical cooperation which already exist" must first be clarified.

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A large number of visitors from all over Germany and from abroad attended the 500th anniversary celebration of the founding of the Moravian Church, held from June 16 to 25 at the Zinzendorf Foundation, Herrnhut, in the DDR.

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Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist, executive secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, called on Dr. Otto Nuschke, president of the Christian Democratic Union of the German Democratic Republic, during his recent brief visit to Berlin.

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Bishop Hanns Lilje, president of the Lutheran World Federation and vice-president of the EKD, recently visited President Eisenhower in Washington.

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Dr. Gerhard May, Bishop of the Protestant Church of Austria, has given full information to Dr. Raab (the Chancellor) and to Protestant members of the Austrian People's Party concerning the Protestant views on the new negotiations for a Concordat, and on a permanent settlement of the relation between Church and State. The bishop explained the Protestant attitude to the legislation on education and marriage (see EPS No. 26) and urged that the injustice done to the Church by the National Socialists be made good, and that Protestants should receive equal rights of citizenship.

E.P.S., Geneva

The next issue of EPS will appear on August 2.

